

VZCZCXYZ0000
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHGZ #0289/01 1430645
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 220645Z MAY 08
FM AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7179
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE
RUCNARFC/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE
RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//USDP/ISA/AP//
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC//J2/J3/J5//
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI//J00/J2/J3/J5//
RHEFAFM/DIRAFMIC FT DETRICK MD//MA-1A//

UNCLAS GUANGZHOU 000289

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE
STATE FOR EAP/CM, OES/IHA, MED, CA/OCS/ACS/EAP
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR ANE AND GH
HHS FOR OGHA STEIGER AND ABDOO
HHS PASS TO FIC/NIH GLASS
CDC FOR NCID MOUNTS AND OGHA BLOUNT
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR OSD/ISA/AP
USDA PASS TO APHIS, FAS (OSTA AND OCRA), FSIS
BANGKOK FOR RMO, CDC, USAID
BEIJING FOR HHS, CDC AND RMO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [AMED](#) [CASC](#) [SOCI](#) [PREL](#) [HHS](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: South China EV 71 Update - HFMD Cases Increase, Though Rate of Infection is Slowing

REF: A) Beijing 1765, B) Guangzhou 0250, C) Beijing 1726, D) Guangzhou 0265

1. (U) Summary: The number of hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD) infections in south China continues to rise, though authorities claim that the pace is slowing. In the past two weeks, Guangdong's reported HFMD cases have risen to 23,278, resulting in seven deaths. The current number has far surpassed original predictions of around 10,000 cases by year's end (ref B). Fujian and Guangxi have not released updated data on infections in the past week and a half. Cases in Hainan province number 654, with no new deaths. End Summary.

Guangdong - Infections Increase, Rate Slows

2. (SBU) As of May 20, Guangdong has reported a total of 23,278 HFMD infections. According to Huang Fei, Deputy Director of the Guangdong Health Department, a total of 21 cities and 119 counties in Guangdong have reported HFMD cases, of which Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Foshan, Dongguan, and Maoming are among the most affected. Of the reported cases, 203 have been confirmed as EV 71 infections, up from 63 as of May 12. Only those patients who have made specific requests, or those cases deemed to be 'critical,' are tested for EV 71 due to a lack of capacity and available reagents. Thus far, the hand, foot, and mouth disease outbreaks have lead to seven deaths (two in Foshan and one each in Guangzhou, Zhanjiang, Maoming, Dongguan and Meizhou). Authorities have confirmed that six of the deaths were caused by EV 71 infections.

3. (SBU) Statistically, 88.9% of the cases reported in Guangdong are children five years-old and younger. Although the numbers of cases are increasing, according to Deputy Director Huang, the latest figures suggest that the rate of infection is slowing. Huang said daily reports indicate that the HFMD infection rate reached its peak on May 8. Guangdong CDC officials are hopeful that the number of cases will not reach 30,000 by the end of the year. Zhang also said that health authorities

have not detected any new mutations or variations in the EV 71 strain during this year's outbreaks.

Guangxi and Fujian - Lack of Up-To-Date Reporting

¶4. (SBU) Updated HFMD statistical data in both Guangxi and Fujian provinces have not been released to the public in almost two weeks. According to the Guangxi Center for Disease Control (CDC), Disease Control Division Chief Geng, the lack of up-to-date reporting is largely due to the involvement of relevant officials in Sichuan's earthquake relief efforts. As of May 9, Guangxi had reported 636 cases, including two deaths. He assured us that the HFMD situation in Guangxi is stable, and stated that the media has placed an undue amount of attention on this annually occurring disease. Geng claims that the reason the disease is so prevalent this year is because of the high incidence of infection in rural areas, where residents lack sufficient access to medical care. Currently, Guangxi has designated 127 hospitals to care for HFMD infections.

¶5. (U) As of May 10, Fujian has reported 1441 cases of HFMD, and no deaths. Fujian has reported that 16 of those cases are linked to EV 71, while another 4 cases are linked to Cocksakie Virus (Cox A16), another virus causing hand, foot, and mouth disease that is often asymptomatic in adults.

Hainan - Three Deaths

¶6. (U) As of May 19, Hainan authorities have documented 1,100 HFMD cases up from 654 confirmed one week ago, including three deaths. Of these, 46 cases have been identified as EV 71 infections.

¶7. (U) Beijing Embassy ESTH has cleared this cable.

GOLDBERG